

# THE PLYMOUTH BANNER.

"THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER, LONG MAY IT WAVE, O'er THE LAND OF THE FREE AND THE HOME OF THE BRAVE."

A Family Newspaper, Devoted to Education, Morals, Science, Agriculture, Commerce, Politics, Markets, General Intelligence, Foreign and Domestic News.

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From Gayley's Lady's Book.

## PAULINA AND BERENICE.

A TALE OF THE SIEGE OF JERUSALEM.

One morning in the month of March, A. D. 70, a young girl, clad in a long robe of white linen, and followed by a single female attendant, was crossing on foot the fertile plain between Ramoth and Jericho, which is sheltered on the north by Mount Gilboa. Her face was concealed by the folds of an ample veil, and she walked along with an air of timidity. After some time, she paused within sight of a dwelling, whose flat roof was shaded by the foliage of two fine olive-trees; thatched sheep folds bounded in a semicircle a wide court, in whose midst a deep cistern contained an abundant supply of clear water. At one side, a green sloping bank, shadowed by a sycamore, invited the traveller to repose; while on the other was a rich prospect of cultivated fields, verdant meadows, and flowery orchards, watered by limpid streams.

As the stranger and her follower paused before the door, a sweet sound of young voices, singing, met their ears. The girl turned towards her attendant, who said—  
"It is the morning song of the daughters of Zion; while your mother lived, I often heard it sung in your father's tent."

The stranger sighed, and was silent. Presently the gates opened, and the scene became full of life. The fields were covered with white herds, with milch cows, with sheep and lambs; while the courts were filled with servants, who passed and repassed, some to milk the cows, some to carry back the vassal filled with the rich milk. Others watered the flowers, already parched by the burning sun, while of the remainder, some gathered fruits in the orchard, and others carried baskets of linen to be washed in the stream.

In a few minutes, a beautiful girl of fifteen, dressed with all the luxury and elegance of a daughter of Judah, bounded out of the house and across the court, apparently intent on rivaling the speed of the graceful gazelle which followed her. Perceiving the stranger, she approached her, and said, with a beaming smile—

"Maiden, wherever thou art, come under the roof of Eleazar my father. He, and Abigail my mother, are both from home, but I will try to supply their places in entertaining thee."

Raising her veil, the traveller displayed features of no common beauty; and, extending her arms, she cried—"My sister!"

"Sister!" replied the daughter of Abigail, with surprise.

"Yes, Berenice; art thou ignorant of our father's former marriage, and my birth?"

"I have heard, indeed, of my father's first wife, but I knew not that she had a daughter."

"Yes; and I am that daughter!"

"Ah, my sister!" cried Berenice, embracing her, "come with me into our—into this house!"

"No!" replied the maiden, in a mournful voice, "the daughter of Marcia and Eleazar may not enter as a stranger beneath her father's roof. But come, my sister, sit down next me on this bank, and let me speak to thee of things concerning the safety of thine, of mine, and of the doomed Jerusalem."

At a sign from Berenice, the servants hastened to bring milk, fruit, and cakes, which they placed before their sisters and then withdrew.

Paulina, for such was the traveller's name, having cooled her burning lips with a refreshing draught of milk, took her sister's hand, and said—

"Marcia, my mother, was the sister of Arricidia, both daughters of Tertullus, a Roman prefect. Arricidia married Titus Sabinius Vespasianus, now emperor of Rome, and whose innumerable army is encamped to-day around the Holy City. Marcia married Eleazar, the son of Simon, one of the chief men of Judah. Shortly before my birth, my mother became a convert to Christianity, through the preaching of St. Paul, the apostle of Jesus Christ. My father, in wrath, sent her from him, divorced her, and two years afterwards, married thy mother. Mine is now dead; and Titus, my uncle, has adopted me, and loves me as a father. To-day, while on the point of reducing Jerusalem to ashes, he has yielded to my tears and prayers, and allowed me to come and rescue thee, thy mother, and our father, who has never yet called me his child."

As she spoke, her young listener's cheeks grew very pale. "God of Israel!" cried she, clasping her hands, "bring back my sister to the faith of her father's!"

"God of the Christians!" said Paulina, raising her eyes towards heaven, "vouchsafe to lead my sister, and all who are dear to her, into the knowledge of Thyself and of Thy Son Jesus Christ!"

At that moment a cloud of dust appeared in the distance, and presently the mother of Berenice approached, riding on a camel. The young Christian veiled her face, while her companion ran forward to embrace her mother. Abigail descended, and, as she folded her daughter in her arms, said, weeping—

"Dear child, we can no longer sojourn in our peaceful home, the armies of the usurper are advancing, and Jerusalem is the only refuge that remains. Come, let us prepare to set out."

"First, my mother," said Berenice, taking Paulina by the hand and gently leading her forwards, "suffer me to present to thee my sister, the daughter of my father and of Marcia."

"She is welcome," said the kind matron; "I will be to her even as a mother. But if she be a Christian, how shall I present her to my husband?"

"If it seem good in thine eyes," said Paulina, "name me to him at first simply as a guest; then I may see my father's eye look on me without anger, and so, if God will, I may find favor in his sight."

"Let us then all set out together," replied Abigail; "my husband expects us to-night to eat with him the passover."

"Alas!" sighed Berenice, "I would rather eat it in our quiet country home, than beneath the lofty roof of the palace of our fathers."

"My daughter," said Abigail, "thy father hath commanded—we must obey."

It was not yet midday when Abigail, the two maidens, and their attendants—each mounted on a camel—quitted the valley of Ramoth; and they made such good speed, that ere sunset they approached Jerusalem. At its first distant view, Abigail exclaimed—"Jerusalem is no longer a city of holiness and of peace, whose prosperity testified to the nations around that the Lord himself had chosen her. A fierce enemy lies outside her gates, and three factions divide her councils within. Thou seest the tower of Phazael, built by Herod in memory of his brother; that is the dwelling of Simon, who governs the district inclosed by the wall of David. John of Giscala, is master of Aphron, and the environs of the temple; thy father commands the remainder of the holy city. Now the impending danger which threatens us all has swallowed up the memory of minor dissensions; and the three chieftains have rallied their forces to oppose the common foe."

A few steps further, and the Holy City lay spread before their eyes like a gorgeous panorama. There was the Temple, with its thousand pillars of white marble, and its roof covered with sharp gilded arrows, to prevent the birds from settling on it. The multitude of stately towers, fair white porticos, and ample roofs, bespoke the riches and beauty of Jerusalem.

The travellers entered the gate, and turned their steps towards the palace of Eleazar. That stately chieftain came out to meet them, and the two young girls bent the knee before him. He blessed Berenice, raised her, and embraced her tenderly. Then, turning towards the young Christian, he said, "Maiden, who art thou?"

"Oh, my father!" sobbed Paulina, "turn not away from the daughter of Marcia."

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"Oh, my father!" sobbed Paulina, "turn not away from the daughter of Marcia."

Accustomed to control his feelings, the fine countenance of Eleazar underwent no change; it preserved the expression of calm dignity befitting a judge and a father in Israel. "Rise, daughter of Marcia," he said, "and explain thine errand."

"It concerns the interests of Judea, and your own safety," said Paulina, looking at her relatives.

"Then," replied Eleazar, who was the high priest, "follow me to the Temple, where the feast of the passover is to be celebrated."

At these words Paulina involuntarily drew back, but a thought of her filial duty reassured her, and she followed. Eleazar into the outer court of the Temple, where was an imposing assemblage of priests, pharisees and doctors of the law.

"My father!" said the girl in a trembling voice, "suffer me to speak a word in thine ear: Jerusalem is standing to-day, to-morrow its walls will be razed to the ground if you do not at once accept the proposal of Titus, who offers you peace."

A loud shout overpowered her voice. Some of the young warriors present, flushed with a partial victory which they had gained over a Roman legion, cried, "No peace with the Romans! Let our soil be steeped in their heathen blood!"

"Sons of Israel!" exclaimed Eleazar, "our enemies fight to destroy, and we to save! God is with us! David, son of my brother Saul," he continued, turning to a young pharisee, "conduct this maiden to the women's apartments."

Notwithstanding her anxiety, Paulina dared not again address her father; so, covering her face with her veil, she followed her cousin to the house. He led her to the door of Abigail's chamber, and when Paulina entered, she found the matron in tears embracing her daughter Berenice.

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"Well," said they, "what tidings?"

"The blindness of the people is marvellous," replied Paulina; "but, though I cannot save them all, let me at least rescue ye and my father."

"Alas!" replied Berenice, "my father even now is preparing for my marriage, not considering that war may soon make me a widow."

"David, the son of Saul, is not a warrior, my daughter," replied Abigail; "and thy father's intention is a fresh proof of his tender solicitude for thy welfare. In the event of his own death, he provides thee with a guide and a protector. The son of Saul inhabits the fertile fields near the banks of Jordan, and after the passover thy friends will conduct thee thither."

Before Berenice could speak, the loud sound of the sacred trumpet was heard in Jerusalem. Abigail took her daughter by the hand, and led her towards the Temple. Paulina, at her own request, remained at home.

The foundations of the Temple were protected by mounds, which the Jewish princes, especially Herod the Great and Agrippa, had raised by degrees. Berenice, whose childhood had passed in strict seclusion, was forcibly struck by the glories of the Holy City; and when they reached the hallowed precincts of the Temple, she gazed with wonder at the gold-covered gates, and the rich ornamental tracery executed in the same precious metal. Behind the tabernacle a veil of white linen, mingled with purple and azure, shadowed the sacred light of the seven-branched candlestick; the odoriferous clouds of incense—the groans of the victims falling beneath the sacrificing knife—the deep-toned voices of men, mingled with the sweet notes of the children in the choir—the priests clothed in fine linen and gold, with Eleazar in their midst, wearing his high priest's robes sparkling with precious stones—all this splendor dazzled the young girl. She thought of her sister, absent from her holy place—her sister whom she had known but a few hours, and for whom she now prayed fervently. Berenice knew not that Paulina, with equal earnestness and a more enlightened faith, was at the same moment praying for her.

Eleazar had returned to his home before his wife and daughter, and when they reached it, they were summoned to his presence. He had taken off his priestly habiliments, and replaced them by a warrior's costume. Paulina knelt before him, weeping bitterly while he turned his face away from hers with an expression of indignant sorrow.

"Abigail," said he, as his wife entered, "when the daughter of Marcia sought our dwelling, I thought we had obtained another daughter to love. The God of Israel has ordered otherwise—His holy will be done! This maiden, unworthy of her God and of her father, has outraged both. She has come, not to share our fate beneath the ruins of Jerusalem, but to draw us away from it—and that in order to introduce amongst us the heresies of a new religion, whose founder was by the order of Pontius Pilate, governor of the Jews, crucified and slain. It becomes me not to enter into controversy with a woman—let her learn obedience. But that I should not, O my wife, needlessly risk the safety of those who are dear to me, David, the son of Saul, shall to-morrow, espouse Berenice, and then he will conduct you, her, and the daughter of Marcia, back to our peaceful retreat."

Having so said, Eleazar left the three women and went to reside in the assembly of the elders of the people, and deliberate on the measures to be taken in the present emergency.

The next day, at the hour when the Levites offer the perpetual sacrifice to the Lord, the bridegroom, accompanied by several young men, and clothed in their nuptial robes, repaired to the dwelling of Eleazar. The bride delayed long, but at length she appeared conducted by her mother, and followed by a numerous train of young virgins clothed in white. Berenice wore a long robe embroidered with gold, and a tunic of pale yellow silk fringed with purple. A girdle of the latter color encircled her slender waist, and a veil of dazzling whiteness, fastened on

her head by a circlet of jewels, floated lightly around her graceful figure. The bride and her companions paused in the great hall, opposite the bridegroom and his companions. Berenice then advanced towards her father, and knelt before him. Eleazar blessed her solemnly, placing both his hands on her head; then raising her and taking her hand, he placed it in that of David.

"My daughter," said he, "behold thy husband! Be to him what the vine is to the elm; let him find in thee the faithfulness of Sarah, the tenderness of Rachel, the fruitfulness of Leah, and the wisdom of Rebecca."

"Daughter of Eleazar," said David, as he gently pressed the hand of his young bride, "in after years it shall pass into a proverb in Israel—'Beloved as Berenice!'"

Then the marriage song began; the harps and the cymbals mingled their sounds with the rich sweet tones of the choral voices. A sumptuous display of the splendid presents bestowed by the chief priest on his daughter's husband succeeded to the concert. Afterwards, preceded by the young men and maidens, bearing branches of myrtle and palm, David and Berenice entered the banquet hall. There the abundance of the Hebrews was united to the luxury of the Romans. Rich draperies, heavy with purple and gold, shadowed the downy perfumed couches prepared for the guests. Delicious wines sparkled in cups of gold; while on the tables roasted sheep and oxen were mingled with the delicate dainties of Greece and Rome. The bird of Lamsa, the gazelle of Shenir, appeared, with game from Sicily, and fish from the Iberian Sea; while the dates of Africa were mingled with the golden apples of Persia, and the luscious fruits of Cyprus with the varied confectionery of Italy.

Suddenly a claron sounded, and an attendant entered to announce that a messenger from Titus waited without the gate.

"Let him enter," said Eleazar. Covered with dust, and a dress disordered by hard riding, a stalwart Roman came in. He raised his casque, and said: "Listen, O Eleazar! harken to my words, and despise them not. Titus, deploring the calamities which his vengeance will bring on thy country, holds in his clemency the sword still suspended, and offers thee pardon and peace. Nothing shall be added to the required tribute, and he gives thy citizens three days to pay it."

"Are the fortresses of Jerusalem burned down, and her defenders in the tomb, that thy master should thus address us, young madman?" replied Eleazar.

"Chief of Israel," said the Roman, in a loud voice, "here is my olive branch.—Before I break it, think of thy city, of its Temple, of thy people, of thy family, and of thy daughter, whose days of wedlock will else be early ended."

"I think but of conquering tyrants!" exclaimed Eleazar.

"Well!" replied the ambassador, as he broke the branch and cast it from him, "thou askest war, and thou shalt have it, fierce, bloody, and exterminating."

A shout of rage burst simultaneously from the young Hebrews present. Berenice arose, pale and trembling. "My father," said she, "give this Roman a safe conduct; else our people will tear him to pieces."

"Spouse of David, I cannot refuse thy first request," replied Eleazar; "let thy brother-in-law Daniel conduct this young lunatic through the camp."

Hurriedly the guests quitted the hall; their joyous bridal songs changed into sounds of war. The young men dropped their festal garments, and donned their armor; each hand threw away its flowers and grasped a sword. Meantime, preparations were making in the plain; palisades were raised, trenches dug, fortifications strengthened. While the soldiers flocked to the ramparts, Eleazar took leave of his wife and two daughters, and giving them in charge to David, said: "To-morrow at daybreak you will set out, take the women, and conduct them in safety to your tranquil home. If the God of Israel has willed the destruction of his people, and the death of its chiefs, you will protect these helpless ones."

As soon as the morning dawned, Abigail, Berenice and Paulina entered a covered litter, and, escorted by David and a mounted party of servants, took the road that leads from Jerusalem towards the south. When they reached the summit of the first hill, they beheld the Roman camp extended before their eyes. Abigail, seeing her number and martial order of the legions, wept and said—

"The hand of the Lord is heavy on his people! Oh, God of Israel! shall thy chosen city be indeed cast down to the ground?"

"What signifies the destruction of the earthly Temple, O my mother!" said Paulina, gently, "if on its ruins our Lord shall build his spiritual church?"

"Child thou art a Christian," replied Abigail, "and cannot not comprehend the sorrows of a Jew."

"But may I not seek to assuage them by pointing to the comfort which cometh from above?"

"What comfort canst thou give to those who lose all?"

"Dear friends," said the young girl, while her eyes filled with tears, and her voice grew tremulous from strong emotion, "would that you might receive comfort where alone it is to be found, even by believing on Him who hath sent his Son to die for our sins, and who hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows."

"Cease, maiden," replied Abigail, in a tone of unwonted severity; "cease to pollute the ears of thy young sister by allusions to the heresy which thou hast unhappily embraced. I, who would fain be as a mother to thee, now command thy silence."

Humbly and meekly Paulina obeyed, but she ceased not to pray earnestly, for in her inmost soul, for the spiritual enlightenment and temporal safety of those who were near and dear to her.

After the little cavalcade had journeyed some miles, and passed by the sepulchre of Rachel, the heat became oppressive; and David, approaching the litter, invited his companions to alight and take some repose. The place he had chosen was a delicious spot of verdure, sheltered by lofty rocks whose crests were crowned with olive-trees; and where the clear waters of a fountain refreshed the weary traveller, and nourished the gay flowers that grew around.

On this soft, natural carpet the servants spread out a repast of bread, meat, and fruit; David asked a blessing, and they all tried to eat; but their hearts were too full and heavy with a sense of impending woe to allow them to relish food.

When they rose to resume their journey, the attendants were going to carry with them the scarcely touched dishes; but David, mindful of that precept of the law which says that the gleanings of the harvest shall be left for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow (Deut. xxiv. 19-21), hindered them, saying—

"Leave the food for some hungry wanderer, who, perchance, will bless the hand that supplies his wants."

The dwelling of David lay near the banks of Jordan, in whose clear waters the green meadows and golden harvest-fields of his patrimony were reflected. As he led his young wife beneath his roof, he said: "May thy life, O Berenice, be as tranquil as thy home, and thy days as peaceful as those glassy waters!"

Then, having also welcomed his mother-in-law and Paulina, David ordered a banquet to be served, of that simple abundant character which distinguishes the feasts of the ancient Hebrews.

Large vases filled with new milk, and others sparkling with the juice of the grape; baskets of bread, cakes and fruit were mingled on the table with roasted kids and pottage of lentils.

Shortly after sunset the whole family retired to rest; and on the morrow, to the inexpressible grief of Berenice, her young husband left her to join the warlike ranks of his people; resolving, in this time of peril, to exchange his plowshare for a sword.

Months passed on, and during many days the inhabitants of David's farm heard no tidings from Jerusalem, when, at length, one evening a wounded man, covered with dust and blood, was seen slowly and wearily approaching the gate. He desired to speak with Abigail, and she immediately recognized in him Horam, the captain of Eleazar's guard.

"What woful tidings bringest thou?" asked the trembling matron.

"Jerusalem is fallen!" cried Horam, tearing his beard; "the enemy has encamped in the Temple of the Lord!"

"My husband—what of him?" asked Abigail; while Berenice murmured the name of David, and Paulina listened with breathless anxiety.

"Famine and pestilence!" replied the captain, "were in the Holy City, and Titus crucified any stray captives whom he seized; yet nothing could conquer the valor of our people, nor force them to yield. At length the Romans raised a wall against the ramparts, and set the city on fire in many places. The holy Temple was in flames, and in their midst perished my noble master. There too, the youthful David and his brother Daniel found their tomb. Now the threatenings of the Most High are accomplished; our nation has no longer a Temple or a country.—Fugitives and wanderers on the earth, when will their sore punishment be ended!"

Horam ended speaking, and a mournful silence followed. It was broken by the loud wailing of Abigail and her daughter, who tore their hair and scattered ashes on their heads. Paulina, pale and trembling sought in vain to comfort them.

On the following morning, Paulina rose early and presented herself in a travelling-dress, with a staff in her hand.

"Whither goest thou?" asked Abigail.

"I go," she replied, "to seek the wounded and the dying; perchance I may be able to staunch their wounds, and bring some comfort to their souls."

"We will go with thee," said her friends, and together these three delicate, unprotected females—united in af-

fection, though not, alas! in faith—set out on the perilous road that led to Jerusalem. Everywhere they beheld devastated fields, burnt houses, dead and dying men. In the fallen city the scenes were yet more awful; for there the plague—a conqueror more resistless than Titus—struck down alike, the vanquishers and the vanquished.

A few days afterwards, three women lay expiring near the city gate. Two of them, with the name of the God of Israel on their lips, cried, "Lord look down upon thy servants!" The third had her eyes raised to heaven, and a smile of holy peace played on her lips. Turning to gaze at her companions, with an expression of unalterable tenderness, she murmured with her dying breath, "Jehovah, Master, have mercy on them!" And then she fell asleep.

## Good Sensible Talk.

The world is full of life—full of action. And there are thousands who loiter on the great race of life. They pass along and leave no record of deeds to live after them. No laudable ambition seems to stir their sluggish souls. No soaring aspiration seems to throb in their hearts. They bask in the sunshine and shun the conflicts where mind grapples with mind, living a brief day, and dying in unbroken night.

Our young men do not appreciate the privileges of this day. They do not make good use of the advantages which surround them. There are many of them who are nobly struggling to do so, but hosts of others seem to have no ambition. No impulse stirs them. The world, in its progress, brings its resources to their very doors, but they have not sufficient energy of character to reach out and grasp them.

We see much to regret in society. The young hearts, where lie the hopes of our country, are too ingloriously idle, or frittering away their usefulness and influence. Let a person pass through the country and mingle with the gatherings of our young men, and they will look with sorrow on the frivolous character presented. Why so much ill breeding? Why so much vulgarity and profanity? Why so rude and repulsive a disregard of all the little courtesies of life? Why is their conversation so grossly coarse? We miss the heart-born politeness that should characterize the conduct of the true gentleman. We even see those claiming gentility and respectability, treating strangers—nay, women—with marked discourtesy and insult; and where is the fault?

There are some "good old ways" which ought not to be departed from—counsels which should not be forgotten. We deprecate the arrogant, selfish, and repulsive manners which so generally mark the character of young people. There is no truer mark of a gentleman than courtesy in the treatment of others. Stale slang is no accomplishment—it is a stain. The ill-bred retort degenerates into deliberate insult. The young man who thinks he is not a "blood young man" until he can show how little he cares for unpretending but shining qualities of modesty and home simplicity, commits a sad mistake. A man may swagger and sneer at all these sacred influences, even at his own mother, and talk boldly about the "foolish old woman," but we should shun him as we would a ruffian.

An Irishman employed about a store in Boston, was one day surprised and delighted by the entrance of an old acquaintance. After a ten minutes' jollification, the caller left, when Pat's employer said to him—

"So Pat, you knew that chap in the old country?"

"Och, an' sure did I; an' it's a lucky day I met wid' m here. It's a fine boy he is, wid all his family. His gran' father was a general, his father was a general, an' he'd been a general hisself if he'd not come away."

"But what was he after in your pockets? I thought I saw him putting his fingers there rather slyly."

Clapping his hands to his pockets, Pat ascertained that both watch and pocket-book were missing.

"Murder!" he cried, gesticulating like a whale with a dozen harpoons in his sides, "the thafe! the spalpeen! the coorse! I knew him well, wid all of his family. His gran'-father was hanged, and his father was hanged, an' he'd have been hanged hisself if he'd not run away!"

The privilege of living within the atmosphere of a great man, can hardly be appreciated. The advantages arising from our intercourse with vigorous thinkers are incalculable. We cannot enter the presence of a great soul without receiving his blessing.

It is a pleasant and profitable habit to store up agreeable images of the past, with a view to present and future improvement as well as enjoyment.

Friendship is the medicine of misfortune; but ingratitude dries up the fountain of all goodness.